

Home Sweet Home RENTING vs BUYING

Thinking of buying a home? Take a look at some of the benefits of home ownership as compared to the benefits of renting. The final decision will depend on your specific situation, but the information here should get the wheels of thought rolling. Good luck!

Benefits of Owning a Home

- ✓ You build equity
- ✓ You can decorate and upgrade as desired
- ✓ There are often less “neighborly” annoyances
- ✓ You don’t have to answer to a landlord
- ✓ You have something to call your own

Benefits of Renting

- ✓ It’s easy to find a place you like
- ✓ You don’t have to pay for repairs
- ✓ The money you save can be invested in other interests
- ✓ Moving is more feasible (buying and selling a home costs big bucks)
- ✓ You may have access to facilities like a pool or gym that you wouldn’t have with home ownership

Above all, make sure you consider this decision very carefully. It’s wise to seek the advice of a lender and to talk with your loved ones about this decision as well. Since the correct decision is different for everyone, consider all the options, take your time, and make the decision that’s right for you. It could be a decision you’ll live with for a lifetime.



Brand New Digs: Make Moving Easier

Whether you’re moving into a new house or simply switching apartments, there are a few things that can make the transition a whole lot easier. This list of ideas is by no means exhaustive, but should help you get started.

Moving On Your Own

- Get free boxes from your local grocery store.
- Put mirrors and pictures between mattresses to reduce the chance of breakage.
- Take doors off the hinges for extra room.
- Put a rug down to keep your carpet clean.
- Rent a truck. They’re inexpensive and easier to load than regular vehicles or pickups.

Hiring A Moving Service

- Contact the Better Business Bureau to find reputable moving companies.
- Look for companies that offer free on-site estimates.
- Schedule your move well in advance—1 month is standard.
- Contract with the mover to get insurance for valuable items.
- To cut down on costs, break down beds, remove mirrors from dressers, etc.



Buying Online

Are You Finding eFraud

Buying a home through the Internet can save time and money, but many of us are still leery of being taken advantage of by hackers and shady business practices. If you understand the risks and know who can help, the advantages of buying online will most likely outweigh any of the possible risks.

Risks of Buying Online

Many sites solicit information from you at the time of a purchase that is not necessary for the transaction. This information can be used without your knowledge and may even be sold to other vendors.

RELIABILITY. With the ease of website creation, a major concern for the online buyer is fraudulent sites. These sites will copy the look and feel of a legitimate page in an attempt to pass themselves off as the real thing.

SECURITY. Unsecured information sent over the Internet can be intercepted. Before giving out potentially sensitive information, such as a credit card number, look for the graphic on your browser that indicates that the business is operating with a secure server.

Who Can Help?

Three of the most notable resources that help protect the e-consumer are the Better Business Bureau Online (bbbonline.com), Consumer Reports (consumerreports.org) and Bizrate.com.

All of these sites offer assistance in the form of credibility seals, e-ratings and/or online buying tips.



Charity Check-Up: Don't Get Duped

Thinking of donating some money to a charitable foundation? Good for you! But remember, while the vast majority of charitable foundations are reputable, there are some that have less than honest intentions.

The guidelines below should help you discern between the two.

- \$ Always write checks to the charity, not the person collecting.**
- \$ When buying an item to benefit a specific cause, ask how much money will actually be donated to the charity and how much will go to the fundraiser.**
- \$ Look out for "sound alike" charities.**
- \$ Check out a specific charity by calling your local Better Business Bureau.**
- \$ If you're still suspicious, ask for the charity's annual report. This will show sources of income and how it was used.**



Source: The Detroit News

